(c) and (d) All the advertisements/programmes of satellite TV channels transmitted or re-transmitted through cable service are required to adhere to the provisions of the Advertising Code and Programme Code prescribed under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and rules framed thereunder. The Central Government has constituted an Inter-Ministerial Committee under Section 20 of the Act to look into the violation of the Programme Code and Advertising Code. The Committee either *suo-moto* or on receipt of complaint, examines cases of violations of the code. Show cause notices are issued in the first instance to TV chanels telecasting objectionable advertisements in violation of code and TV channels are directed not to telecast/re-telecast the advertisement, which are found to be violative of the Advertising Code. So far 57 Show Cause Notices have been issued in 2006 upto 15.05.2006. This is an ongoing process. Government has issued an order on 6th September, 2005 for constitution of Monitoring Committees at the State and district levels to monitor private satellite TV channels and local cable channels to detect and look into violations of the Programme and Advertising Code and complaints received from general public regarding violation of the Code. As per the Ministry of Women and Child Development which administers the Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986, there is negative depiction of the image of women in print media. As per section 3 and 4 of the Act, publishing of obscene/ indecent portrayal of women is a punishable offence. Under the Act, an officer designated by the State Government is empowered to take action in instances of its violation. Further, the Press Council, a statuory autonomous body, set up under the Press Council Act, 1978 with the twin object of preserving the freedom of the press and of maintaining and improving the standards of newspapers and news agencies in India has also laid down "Norms of Journalistic Conduct" stipulating for obscenity and vulgarity to be eschewed.

Conditions of overseas Indians

3551. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the living and economic conditions of overseas Indians in general and the working class in particular;

(b) whether the overseas Indians are treated as second class citizens in the social status;

(c) whether there is a silent move to discourage the inflow of Indians abroad and get employed;

(d) whether it is a fact that overseas Indians are not employed in certain category of employment irrespective of their merit, qualification and fitness; and

(e) the initiative to make a thorough study of the various problems of Indians abroad and the measures proposed to be taken to correct such burning issues faced by them?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) and (b) Over the years, overseas Indians in general have prospered socially and economically in their respective countries of domicile. NRI/PIOs have gained political and economic prominence in several countries such as USA, UK and Canada. Overseas Indians are recognized for their technical skills, knowledge and expertise in frontier technologies such as information technology and bio-technology. Overseas Indian workers are estimated at between 4 to 5 million with an annual gross flow of half a million workers excluding returnees. These workers are mostly semi/un-skilled and are appreciated for their sincerity, hard work and non-interference abroad. The remittances by overseas Indian workers into India are estimated at $12-15 billion annually. The largest numbers of overseas Indian workers are in the Gulf countries and are mainly in the unorganized sector. Since they are not covered by local labour laws, there are instances of workers being subjected to long working hours, non-payment of wages, poor working conditions etc. When such instances are reported, steps are taken by our Missions to redress the grievances of the workers.

(c) and (d) While there is no overt move by foreign Governments to check the inflow of Indians to their countries, barriers have been raised through strict immigration/visa procedures, excessive checks and control in their travel to and stay in the host country.

(e) A separate Ministry, *i.e.* the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs has been created to look after the affairs of Indians abroad which works in tandem with the Ministry of External Affairs to address the problems and concerned of overseas Indians. Besides comprehensive amendment to the Emigration Act, other measures including the streamlining of the emigration process through E-governance and a publicity campaign to

create awareness amongst potential overseas workers on their rights and obligations will be initiated.

Inhuman treatment with Indian labourers migrated in Gulf countries

3552. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Indian labourers migrated to Gulf countries are being subjected to inhuman treatment;

(b) if so, whether it is because of absence of any comprehensive migration policy;

(c) whether Government are considering for any comprehensive policy so that labourers are not faced with inhuman treatment in future; and

(d) if so, by when and in what manner the migration policy is being enacted?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) Complaints regarding ill treatment and exploitation of workers as well as cases/disputes regarding service benefits, legal dues etc. are received from time to time. Action is taken through the Indian Missions to redress such grievances of workers and for the amicable settlement of disputes. However, those who take up employment overseas illegally after going there on visit visas are susceptible to exploitation and have no protection of law in the host country.

(b) to (d) Migration of Indian workers for overseas employment is governed by The Emigration Act, 1983. In order to further protect the interests of Overseas Indian workers, the Government is considering suitable amendments to the Act.

Elections to Panchayati Raj Institutions

†3553. SHRI SURESH BHARDWAJ: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether timely elections for Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) are being held in all States;

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor, State-wise;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.